

CAPSULE SUMMARY

Bester Elementary

WA-HAG-242 (Within Hagerstown Historic District WA-HAG-158)

30 East Memorial Avenue Boulevard

Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland

1930-1931

Public Access

Bester Elementary School was constructed in 1930-1931 as South Potomac Junior High School and was one of two junior high schools built to relieve the overcrowding of the Hagerstown High School. The original portion of the building was designed in the Collegiate Gothic style by architect Charles E. Kountz, who employed a new type of steel construction that forced the city to make revisions to its antiquated building code. Although not completed, the school opened to students in September of 1931. The building, enlarged as the growing student population necessitated, was dedicated in part as Bester Elementary School in 1965. Named after the previous proprietor of the land, Henry A. Bester, Bester Elementary set a precedent in Washington County when it became the first school to be given a non-geographical name. In 1967, with the opening of the South Hagerstown Junior High School, the South Potomac Junior High School was closed and the entire building transitioned for use as an elementary school. Today, the school has a total enrollment of approximately 474 students. Bester Elementary School, exemplifying Hagerstown's prosperous twentieth-century growth, is significant for its educational and social contributions, serving not only the student population but the community with its sporting events and theatrical performances.

Roughly "L"-shaped in plan, the 67,248-square-foot structure is a result of three building campaigns. The original "T"-shaped footprint, which included the main block and auditorium wing, was expanded circa 1938 when a one-story brick gymnasium was added. In 1965 a one-story 30,575-square-foot brick addition designed by architects Coble and Burger extended the footprint to the east and north. Bester Elementary School is a contributing resource to the Hagerstown Historic District, which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on February 2, 1994.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-242

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic South Potomac Junior High School
other Bester Elementary School (preferred name)

2. Location

street and number 30 Memorial Boulevard East ___ not for publication
city, town Hagerstown ___ vicinity
county Washington

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Board of Education of Washington County
street and number 820 Commonwealth Avenue telephone (301) 766-2860
city, town Hagerstown state MD zip code 21740

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washington County liber 185 folio 210
city, town Hagerstown tax map 307 tax parcel N/A tax ID number N/A

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☒ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
☐ Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	1
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	0
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> defense	1
		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	0
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	0

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
0

7. Description

Inventory No. WA-HAG-242

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Bester Elementary School, historically known as South Potomac Junior High School, is located at 30 East Memorial Boulevard in Hagerstown, Maryland. Roughly "L"-shaped in plan, the 67,248-square-foot structure is a result of three building campaigns beginning with a two-story brick building constructed in 1930-31, a one-story brick addition constructed circa 1938, and finally a one-story concrete block and brick addition constructed in 1965. The original two-story structure was designed by architect Charles E. Kountz and was fashioned in the Collegiate Gothic style. The "T"-shaped footprint, which includes the main block and auditorium wing, was expanded to the east circa 1938 when a one-story brick gymnasium was added. In 1965 a one-story 30,575-square-foot brick addition designed by architects Coble and Burger expanded the footprint to the east and north. Adjacent to the 1965 addition are four detached vinyl-sided portable classrooms and a shed topped by a shallow gambrel roof. The school is flanked by a parking lot to south with playground equipment located to the north and west of the structure.

Building Description

Sited at the northeast corner at the intersection of East Memorial Boulevard and South Potomac Street, the building is situated on a 12.79-acre parcel and is positioned on an east-west axis facing west on South Potomac Street. The school is adjacent to a predominately residential neighborhood with some commercial properties and is located at the intersection of two major thoroughfares in the city. Rose Hill Cemetery is located just south of the structure. The current configuration of the building is a result of three building campaigns spanning from its original construction in 1930-31 to a final addition in 1965. The 1930s structure underwent substantial renovations in 1988. These efforts altered the exterior appearance and interior layout of the building; however no changes were made at this time to the building's footprint.

Exterior:

1930-31 Original Building

The 1930-31 section of the building faces west on South Potomac Street and stands as a two-story steel structure set on a concrete foundation. The envelope is faced in red brick coursed in all-stretcher bond and features a low water table. The original building can be divided into two parts: the main building and rear auditorium wing. The main building is "U"-shaped in plan and features two projecting bays to the north and south. The west façade of the main building is five bays wide and is symmetrical in composition. A projecting central bay is further punctuated by two full-height hexagonal towers rising slightly above the roofline of the building. This central bay originally functioned as the main entrance to the building and features a concrete surround with an inset Gothic-styled arch topped by a concrete panel. Set within the panel is an applied metal sign that reads "Bester Elementary." The doors originally located below the arch were removed in 1988 and replaced with a set of fixed single-light metal windows topped with an arched transom supported by a concrete lug sill. The remaining portion of the opening was infilled with concrete. Just above the concrete panel and metal sign are two metal combination casement and sash windows topped by rowlock and soldier brick headers and supported by rowlock brick sills.

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Fenestration at the west façade at both the first and second stories consists of eight-light combination casement and sash metal replacement windows with rowlock and soldier brick headers and rowlock brick sills. Metal ventilation grilles are interspersed below the window openings at the first and second stories. The structure is topped by a flat roof and features a brick parapet wall ornamented with interspersed concrete diamond panels and a central concrete shield inscribed with "1930."

The north and south elevations of the original 1930-31 main building are modestly ornamented relative to the west façade. At the "U"-shaped portion of the main building, the north and south elevations are unfenestrated and feature a centrally located rectangular brick panel framed by soldier-coursed bricks with square concrete panels at each corner. The projecting wings are visible from these elevations and both consist of a side entry accessed by a straight flight of concrete stairs with metal double doors flanked by sidelights on both sides. Just above the side entrance is a single metal eight-light casement window matching in detail to those found at the west elevation. The remainder of the elevation features a rectangular brick panel framed by soldier-coursed bricks with concrete panels at each corner. The concrete foundation, water table, and soldier and rowlock string courses visible at the west elevation continue at the north and south elevations.

The one-story brick auditorium wing, completed in 1931, is also visible at the north and south elevations. Rectangular in plan, the rear wing extend east from the central section of the main building. The north elevation features a side entrance consisting of a single metal door accessed by a concrete straight stair running parallel to the building. The original auditorium wing has minimal architectural detailing and is fenestrated at both the north and south elevations with multi-light metal windows. A brick chimney rises from the rear elevation of the wing.

Much of the east elevation of the original building is concealed by subsequent additions with the exception of the projecting north and south wings. Both wings at the east elevation are fenestrated with metal windows matching those found at the west elevation with seven at both the first and second stories. The south wing's east elevation features a total of eight windows at the second story. The water table and brick string courses found at the front and side elevations continue along the rear elevation of the main building. Metal ventilation grilles are interspersed below window openings at the first and second stories.

c. 1938 Gymnasium Addition

A one-story, three-bay, brick addition constructed circa 1938 extends east from the original 1930-31 structure, further extending the "T"-shaped plan of the building. This wing originally housed the school gymnasium and features two one-story projecting wings roughly two thirds the height and width of the addition. The wings originally housed the gym locker rooms. The design of the structure defers to the 1930s wing and features little stylistic ornamentation. The brick mass is pierced by metal multi-light windows with stone sills. The south

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elevation of the addition is largely concealed by an addition constructed in 1965. The exposed north elevation features a side entrance consisting of a single metal door accessed by a straight stair with two runs. The east elevation is four bays wide and fenestrated with four metal multi-light windows each separated by three vertical brick projections that act as mullions.

1965 Rear Elementary School Addition

The 1965 addition is a one-story concrete block structure faced with brick and topped by a flat roof. The one-story height of the building varies slightly in certain sections, resulting in an irregular roofline. The addition differentiates itself from the original structure and subsequent addition through its height and its modest style influenced by the Modern Movement. Irregularly shaped in plan, the addition wraps the south elevation of the 1930-31 and 1938 structures and extends the footprint to the east and north. The south elevation of the 1965 addition can be divided into three sections. The westernmost section consists of three entrances; two secondary and one covered main entryway. The doorways are separated by a series of single-light windows topped with soldier brick headers. The central section consists of an off-centered entry with double doors framed to the east by three, paired three-light metal windows with sloped rowlock brick sills. Below each window sill is a projecting brick bump-out topped with a slate cover extending slightly beyond the width of each opening. The third section consists only of a plain brick wall with off-centered metal lettering that reads, "Bester Elementary School." The east and west elevations of the 1965 addition are similarly patterned and feature single metal doorways and three-light metal ribbon windows with angled rowlock brick sills. The bays at each elevation are divided by narrow projecting brick walls, each two bricks wide. Adjacent to the 1965 addition are four detached vinyl-sided portable classrooms and a shed topped by a shallow gambrel roof.

Interior

The interior detailing and configuration of the 1930s structures, with the exception of the gymnasium and main stairwells, have been significantly altered since their original construction. Many of the original finishes have been removed or covered with new finishes. Perhaps the most significant alteration was the removal of the central main entry at the west elevation of the 1930-31 structure in 1988 and conversion of the lobby and administration area into one large classroom. The concrete archway remains exposed at the interior of the new classroom. The main entrance was relocated to the south elevation of the 1965 structure and today much of the building circulation originates from this entrance.

A double-loaded corridor runs on a north-south access at the center of the "U"-shaped section of the 1930-31 main building at the first and second floors. Interior stairwells accessed by the side entrances cap the ends of the corridor. A series of classrooms flank either side of the corridor with bathrooms located towards the center at both the first and second floors. East of the main corridor is a large media classroom housed in the former auditorium. The original finishes of the auditorium are no longer extant and have been replaced with acoustic

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ceiling tiles and vinyl composite tile flooring. Running along the south side of the media center on an east-west axis is the main corridor of the 1965 structure. This corridor runs off the southern end of the original corridor of the main building and connects the main building to the 1965 elementary school addition. The slightly sloped corridor features exposed concrete walls and painted concrete flooring. To the north, off the corridor, a stairway leads up to the doorway of the gymnasium structure. The brick wall of the circa 1938 gymnasium is exposed along this corridor. The gymnasium retains much of its original interior finishing with exposed glazed brick and wood flooring. The northern and southern locker rooms wings feature original tiling.

East of the gymnasium, a dog-leg corridor leads to the lobby and administrative offices of the 1965 addition. North off the corridor is a large cafeteria consisting of a kitchen to the west, a central dining area, and a stage at the eastern end. The eastern end of the cafeteria corridor leads to a double-loaded corridor running perpendicularly. The corridors throughout the 1965 addition feature poured terrazzo flooring, painted concrete block walls, and an acoustic tiled ceiling. The easternmost corridor is flanked a series of classrooms.

Integrity

Bester Elementary School, historically known in part as South Potomac Junior High School, retains its integrity of location and setting. The 1988 renovation substantially altered the original 1930-31 appearance of the structure and additions made circa 1938 and 1965 altered the original footprint of the building. The 1988 renovation resulted in the following alterations: historic 9/9 sash windows were replaced with eight-light metal windows, the original central entrance at the west façade was in-filled, two crenellated tower caps were removed, and the cast stone string courses were removed. While subsequent additions and alterations have diminished the building's integrity, its continued use as an educational facility for over eighty-two years in the city of Hagerstown contributes to its associational integrity.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____	

Specific dates	1930-31	Architect/Builder	Charles E. Kountz (1930-31);
Construction dates	1930-31, 1938, 1965		A.J. Klinkhart (c.1938); Coble and Burger (1965)

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register ☐ Maryland Register ☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Statement of Significance

Bester Elementary School was constructed in 1930-31 as South Potomac Junior High School and was one of two junior high schools built in Hagerstown that year to relieve the overcrowding of the Hagerstown High School. The original portion of the building was designed by architect Charles E. Kountz in the Collegiate Gothic style on the site of the former Willow Lane Ballpark. Kountz employed a new type of steel construction for the structure, forcing the city to make much-needed revisions to its antiquated building code. Although the building was not completed, the school opened to students in September of 1931.¹ Subsequent additions to the original school building were constructed circa 1938 and 1965, and a substantial renovation of the building was completed in 1988. The rear 1965 addition was dedicated as the Bester Elementary School. Named after the previous proprietor of the land, Henry A. Bester, Bester Elementary set a precedent in Washington County when it became the first school to be given a non-geographical name. In 1967, with the opening of the South Hagerstown Junior High School, the South Potomac Junior High School was closed and the entire building transitioned for use as an elementary school. Today, the school has a total enrollment of approximately 474 students. Bester Elementary School, exemplifying Hagerstown's prosperous twentieth-century growth, is significant for its educational and social contributions, serving not only the student population but the community with its sporting events and theatrical performances.

Bester Elementary School is a contributing resource within the boundaries of the Hagerstown Historic District, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (listed February 2, 1994). The historic district has a period of significance of c.1770-1941 and represents the areas of significance of government, architecture, and commerce.

¹ "Schools Open Per Schedule," *Daily Mail*, Hagerstown, Maryland, September 8, 1931.

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Historic Context

Originally established in 1762, Hagerstown was settled on the fertile lands of an area known as Cumberland Valley by Jonathan Hager. The city of Hagerstown has served as the county seat of Washington County, Maryland, since 1776 and initially grew as a governmental and agricultural center. Between the early to late nineteenth centuries, advancements in transportation including road improvements and railroad lines greatly expanded the city's trade networks. These advancements, coupled with developments in technology and mass production, further established the city's role as a transportation, manufacturing, and agricultural hub for Western Maryland. By 1887, three public school buildings were located in Hagerstown with a total capacity of 2,000 students. The three schools included the Male and Female High School and the Antietam Grammar School.² By 1914, Hagerstown became the second leading city in manufacturing for the state of Maryland.³ Aligning with national trends of urbanization and industrialization by the mid-nineteenth century, Hagerstown experienced a rapid period of growth between 1880 and 1940. The city's population increased from 6,627 in 1880 to 32,491 by 1940 and by this time was known for its multitude of thriving industries. These industries included machine shops, railroad repair, grist mills, furniture manufacturing, knitted goods, and organs.⁴ The rapid expansion of Hagerstown between 1880 and 1940 marks city's most flourishing period of development and many of the residential, commercial, institutional/educational, and industrial improvements of this time period define the city today.

The construction of South Potomac Junior High School exemplifies the influx in population Hagerstown experienced by the 1930s. It was one of two junior high schools constructed in 1930 to alleviate overcrowded conditions at Hagerstown High School. In January of 1930, the site of Willow Lane Baseball Park, constructed circa 1920, was chosen as the site for the new junior high school.⁵ An article describes the designs for the school as being similar to the junior high school constructed in the north end; two stories high with a long and narrow massing.⁶ Henry A. Bester, Jr., Fred G. Bester, Hallie V. Bester, and Clare M. Bester sold approximately 5.5 acres of land for a total of \$24,000 to the Washington County Board of Education to serve as the site of the new school.⁷ The Bester family was well known in Hagerstown for its family-owned florist business, Henry A. Bester & Sons, established in 1847.⁸ Centrally located in the town, the site was chosen for

² *Hagerstown: An Illustrated Description of the City of Hagerstown, Maryland*, (Hagerstown: The Mail Publishing Company, 1887), 30.

³ Richard Walsh and William Lloyd Fox, eds., *Maryland a History: 1632-1974*, (Baltimore: Schneidereith & Sons, 1974), 431.

⁴ *Ibid*.

⁵ "Ball Park is Selected for High School," *Daily Mail*, Hagerstown, Maryland, January 29, 1930.

⁶ *Ibid*.

⁷ "Bester Elementary, School E.D. 17- S.F. 1," Records from the Washington County School Board files; Henry A. Bester, et. al, Washington County Land Records; Liber 185: Folio 210, March 18, 1930.

⁸ WHILBR Western Maryland's Historical Library, "H.A. Bester & Sons, Florists," *Story of Hagerstown Maryland: 1911*, <http://www.whilbr.org/itemdetail.aspx?idEntry=6582> (accessed June 18, 2012).

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its ideal location and proximity to the residential neighborhoods in the area. Designed by architect Charles E. Kountz, the building featured twenty rooms and a small multi-purpose section for the auditorium and gymnasium to serve grades seven through nine. Construction began in 1930 and resulted in a two-story "U"-shaped mass with projecting bays on the north and south elevations. A cornerstone on the building reads "1930-1931," which indicates that construction on the original building continued after the school opened its doors to students in September 1931. Because of the extreme need for the opening of the junior high school, it appears as the classrooms and offices were constructed first, and the construction of the rear auditorium addition, giving the building a "T"-shaped plan, was delayed until the following summer.

The building's steel structure was faced in red brick coursed in all-stretcher bond with a concrete foundation and water table. At the time of its construction, a steel-framed structure was unprecedented in school construction in the city and required the City of Hagerstown to revise the code to allow this type of construction.⁹ The main entrance to the school was centered on the west elevation between two full-height hexagonal towers with crenellated parapets that rose above the roofline of the building. The entrance was set within a Gothic-styled arch with a concrete surround, topped by a concrete panel with inscription that read "South Potomac Junior High School." The building was executed in the Collegiate Gothic style and ornamented with rowlock and soldier brick string courses, molded concrete string courses, and decorative brick and concrete panels. Window openings originally held 9/9 sash windows and featured cast stone sills and lintels.

The original 1930-31 building, designed by Charles E. Kountz, was fashioned in the Collegiate Gothic style. The style gained popularity by the early twentieth century as educational and other institutional buildings utilized and adapted the style. This style was considerably popular for school construction due to its stylistic allowance of large windows to supply ample light to classrooms.¹⁰ Often found in urban areas amidst industrialization, the Collegiate Gothic style was often employed due to its picturesque aesthetic created by features such as ornate archways, intricate brick work, and towers. By the 1920s nearly seventy-five percent of school buildings constructed during this time were of the Collegiate Gothic style.¹¹ Kountz's design for South Potomac Junior High School exemplified this architectural trend as much of Hagerstown faced industrialization during the time of its construction. Other schools in the city designed during this time were also fashioned in the Collegiate Gothic style including the junior high school designed for the north end.

⁹ "Will Permit Use of New Steel Construction in Proposed Junior Hi[gh] Schools," *Daily Mail*, Hagerstown, Maryland, May 9, 1930.

¹⁰ Rawson W. Haddon, "Modern American School Houses: Some Recent Examples of Specialized Buildings," *Architectural Record* 36, July-December (1914), 259.

¹¹ James Betelle, "Architectural Styles as Applied to School Buildings," *The American School Building Journal*, April (1919).

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c. 1938 Rear Wing

According to newspaper records, the school board approved plans for a brick addition to South Potomac Junior High School in April of 1938. At the time, the estimated cost of the structure, designed by architect A.J. Klinkhart, totaled \$30,000.¹² By December of 1938, a contract to construct the addition was awarded to Norman S. Early.¹³ No documentation has been located that indicates that the addition described in 1938 was actually constructed, however a newspaper article in 1939 touts the employment of over 120 residents for six school projects in Washington County including a new gymnasium at the "South Potomac Street Junior High School."¹⁴ Additionally, photographs found in a yearbook from 1946 clearly show a completed rear wing of the building that is consistent with the character of the existing rear wing. Constructed as a one-and-a-half-story rectangular brick wing extending from the east of the original structure, the brick addition housed the gym and featured one-story projections at the north and south sides containing the locker rooms. By the 1940s, the school proved to be an integral part of the community, hosting both sporting and theatrical events. An article published in April of 1940, touts a packed auditorium with many patrons standing for a variety program performed by students.¹⁵

c. 1965 Rear Addition

In the 1960s Washington County faced issues related to overcrowded school conditions again, this time related to enrollment at the elementary level. The Bester family owned a 7.3 acre parcel of land behind South Potomac Junior High and sold it in 1963 for \$56,000 for the purposes of expanding the school.¹⁶ By 1965 construction was underway at three separate sites in the county including an elementary school addition at South Potomac Junior High School.¹⁷ Architects Coble and Burger were awarded the contract in February 1965. The architects designed a one-story concrete block building faced with brick and influenced in style by the Modern Movement. The building's interior encompassed an additional 33,186 square feet, which brought the total building area to over 67,000 square feet. Unlike the circa 1938 addition, the 1965 addition was not designed to defer to the 1930s building, but rather changed the orientation of the entire structure. The school's main entrance was relocated to the south elevation of the addition, and the school's address was changed to 30 East Memorial Boulevard. The 1965 structure wrapped around the south side of the circa 1938 addition to provide the school with a new frontage along East Memorial Boulevard and extended north, beyond the north building line of the 1930s building. During its construction phase, the rear addition was often referred to as "South

¹² "Bids Open for School Addition," *Morning Herald*, Hagerstown, Maryland, April 1, 1938.

¹³ "Contracts Let at Meeting of Board," *Morning Herald*, Hagerstown, Maryland, December 23, 1938.

¹⁴ "Over 200 on PWA Projects," *Daily Mail*, Hagerstown, Maryland, May 25, 1939.

¹⁵ "Hit is scored by High School Show," *Morning Herald*, Hagerstown, Maryland, April 12, 1940.

¹⁶ "Bester Elementary, School E.D. 17- S.F. 1," Records from the Washington County School Board files; Henry A. Bester, et. al, Washington County Land Records; Liber 399: Folio 448, 1963.

¹⁷ "Elementary Schools Expand," *Morning Herald*, Hagerstown, Maryland, June 26, 1965.

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Potomac Addition or Antietam Replacement.” In March of 1965, this portion of the school was dedicated as Bester Elementary, after the Bester Family due to their long-standing association with the school’s land.¹⁸

By 1967 construction of yet another junior high school in Hagerstown was completed, forcing the closure of the South Potomac Junior High School. The building was then used solely as an elementary school. In 1988, Bushey Associates, Inc., Architects oversaw renovation of the original 1930-31 building. This renovation included replacement of historic 9/9 sash windows with eight-light metal windows. Other possible alterations attributed to the 1988 renovation include the alteration of the original entrance, the removal of the tower parapets, and the removal of the cast stone string courses.

The school remains in operation today and has continuously served the city of Hagerstown for over eighty years. Additions and alterations over the course of the school’s history have diminished the integrity of the original structure. However, the school remains a contributing resource to the Hagerstown Historic District for its representation of the city’s growth in the twentieth century.

Chain of Title

Deed
Liber 185: Folio 210
March 18, 1930.

Henry A. Bester, Jr., Fred G. Bester, Hallie V. Bester
and Clare M. Bester to Board of Education of
Washington County

Deed
Liber 399: Folio 448
October 10, 1963

Henry A. Bester, Jr. and Clare M. Bester to the Board
of Education of Washington County, Maryland

¹⁸ “Names School for Bester,” *Morning Herald*, March 23, 1965.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. WA-HAG-242

Fox, William Lloyd and Richard Walsh, eds.. *Maryland a History: 1632-1974*. Baltimore: Schneidereith & Sons, 1974.

National Register of Historic Places, Hagerstown Historic District, Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland, National Register # 93001551.

Scharf, J. Thomas, *History of Maryland*. Philadelphia: Louis Everts, 1882.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 12.79 acres
Acreage of historical setting 5.5 acres
Quadrangle name Hagerstown

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

Bester Elementary School is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of East Memorial Boulevard and South Potomac Street in Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland. The school building occupies the western half of a 12.79-acre parcel and faces west on South Potomac Street. Bester Elementary School is located within the boundaries of the Hagerstown Historic District, which was listed in the Maryland Register of Historic Properties and the National Register of Historic Places (listed February 2, 1994). The elementary school has been associated with this property since its original construction in 1930.

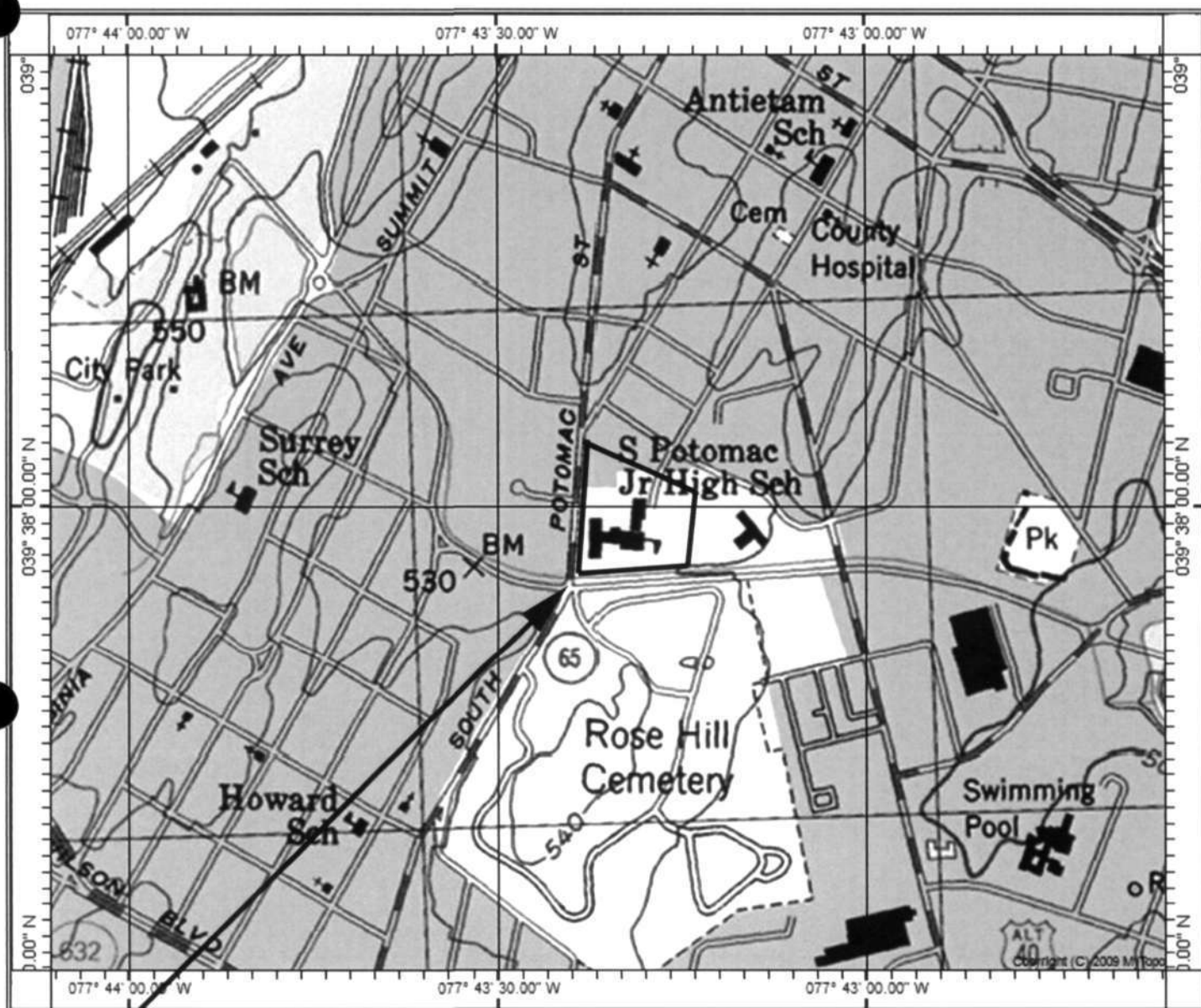
11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Latishia Allen/ Historic Preservation Specialist		
organization	EHT Traceries, Inc.	date	June 29, 2012
street & number	1121 5 th Street	telephone	(202) 393-1199
city or town	Washington	state	D.C.

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600



(WA-HAG-242) Bester Elementary (South Potomac Junior High School)
 Located within Hagerstown Historic District (WA-HAG-158)
 30 East Memorial Boulevard, Washington County, MD
 Hagerstown, USGS Topographic Map, 2002
 EHT Traceries, 2012



<p align="center">Bester Elementary WA-HAG-242 35 mm B&W Negative Lists</p>	<p>Photographer: EHT Traceries</p> <p>Date: June 2012</p>
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Roll #1: Exterior

36.	Not submitted.		
35.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	West and north elevation, looking southeast
34.	Not submitted.		
33.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Detail of west elevation looking, east
32.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	West elevation, looking northeast
31.	Not submitted.		
30.	Not submitted.		
29.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Looking northeast
28.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	West and south elevations, looking northeast
27.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	South and east elevations, looking northwest
26.	Not submitted.		
25.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Looking northwest
24.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	East elevation, looking west
23.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Detail of infilled archway, looking east
22.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	North elevation, looking southeast
21.	Not submitted.		
20.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	1965 addition, west elevation, looking southeast
19.	Not submitted.		
18.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	North elevation, looking southwest
17.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Rear of building, portable classrooms, looking southwest
16.			
15.			
14.			
13.			

12.			
11.			
10.			
9.			
8.			
7.			
6.			
5.			
4.			
3.			
2.			
1.			

Roll #2: Interior

Neg. #			
36.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, corridor 1st floor, looking, northeast
35.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, corridor 1st floor, looking southeast
34.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, corridor, 1st floor, looking north
33.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, cafeteria, looking northwest
32.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, gymnasium, looking northeast
31.	Not submitted.		
30.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, 1st floor classroom, looking southwest
29.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, 1st floor stairwell, looking, northeast
28.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, 2nd floor classroom, looking northwest
27.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, 2nd floor corridor looking southeast
26.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, 1st floor classroom with arch infill, looking west

25.	Not submitted.		
24.	Not submitted.		
23.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, media room, looking southwest
22.	Not submitted.		
21.	Not submitted.		
20.	Not submitted.	WA-HAG-242	1965 Addition corridor, looking west
19.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, gymnasium locker room, looking southeast
18.	Not submitted.		
17.	Not submitted.		
16.	Not submitted.		
15.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, lobby, 1st floor, looking southwest
14.	Not submitted.		
13.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Interior, cafeteria kitchen, 1st floor, looking northwest
12.	Not submitted.		
11.	Not submitted.		
10.	Not submitted.		
9.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Detail of cornerstone with 1930, looking east
8.	30 East Memorial Boulevard	WA-HAG-242	Detail of cornerstone with 1988 and 2030, looking southeast
7.	Not submitted.		
6.	Not submitted.		
5.	Not submitted.		
4.	Not submitted.		
3.	Not submitted.		
2.	Not submitted.		
1.	Not submitted.		



WA-HAG-242
BESTER ELEMENTARY
30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE.
HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACERIES

JUNE 2012

WEST AND NORTH ELEVATION, LOOKING SOUTHEAST

1/30



WA - HAG - 242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACERIES

JUNE 2012

DETAIL OF WEST ELEVATION, LOOKING EAST

2/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY
30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE
HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACKIES

JUNE 2012

WEST ELEVATION, LOOKING NORTHEAST

3/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTEX ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE.

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACES

JUNE 2012

LOOKING NORTHEAST

4/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACEXIES

JUNE 2012

WEST AND SOUTH ELEVATIONS, LOOKING NORTHEAST

S/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACKIES

JUNE 2012

SOUTH AND EAST ELEVATIONS, LOOKING NORTHWEST

6/30



WA - HAG - 242

BESTEX ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACERIES

JUNE 2012

LOOKING NORTHWEST

7/30



WA-HA0-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRAILERIES

JUNE 2012

EAST ELEVATION, LOOKING WEST

8/30

**BESTER
ELEMENTARY**



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACEXIES

JUNE 2012

DETAIL OF INFILLED ARCHWAY, LOOKING EAST

9/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

BHT TRACEXIES

1 JUNE 2012

NORTH ELEVATION LOOKING SOUTHEAST

10/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACEXIES

JUNE 2012

1965 ADDITION, WEST ELEVATION, LOOKING SOUTHEAST

11/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

ENT TRACERIES

1 JUNE 2012

NORTH ELEVATION LOOKING SOUTHWEST

12/30



WA - HAG - 242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRAILERIES

JUNE 2012

PORTAL CLASSROOMS, LOOKING SOUTHWEST

13/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACERIES

JUNE 2012

DETAIL OF CORNERSTONE WITH 1930, LOOKING EAST

14/30



WA - HAG - 242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACERIES

JUNE 2012

DETAIL OF CORNERSTONE WITH 1788 AND 2030, LOOKING SOUTHEAST

15/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRALEXIES

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR, CORRIDOR, 1ST FLOOR, LOOKING NORTHEAST

16/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

ENTRANCES

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR CORRIDOR, 1ST FLOOR, LOOKING SOUTHEAST

17/30



WA-HAB-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRAXES

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR, CORRIDOR 1ST FLOOR, LOOKING NORTH

18/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTEX ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACKIES

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR, GYMNASIUM, LOOKING NORTHWEST

19/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTEK ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACERIES

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR, GYMNASIUM, LOOKING NORTHEAST

20/30



WA-HAG - 242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

ENTRANCE

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR, 1ST FLOOR CLASSROOM, LOOKING SOUTHWEST

2/1/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACERIES

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR, 1ST FLOOR STAIRWELL, LOOKING NORTH-EAST

22/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACERIES

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR, 3RD FLOOR CLASSROOM, LOOKING NORTHWEST

23/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACERIES

1WBE 2012

INTERIOR, 2ND FLOOR CORRIDOR, LOOKING SOUTHEAST

24/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACESIES

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR, 1ST FLOOR CLASS ROOM WITH ARCH INFILL, LOOKING WEST

25/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

ELTT TRACKIES

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR, MEDIA ROOM, LOOKING SOUTHWEST

24/30



WA - HAG - 242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EXT TRACERIES

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR, 1965 ADDITION CORRIDOR, LOOKING WEST

27/30



WA-HAG-242

BESTER ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACKIES

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR, GYMNASIUM LOCKER ROOM LOOKING SOUTHEAST

28/30



WA-1440-242

BESTEK ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRACIGIES

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR, LOBBY, 1ST FLOOR, LOOKING SOUTH-WEST

29/30



WA-HAB-242

BESTEK ELEMENTARY

30 EAST MEMORIAL AVE

HAGERSTOWN, MD

EHT TRAILERIES

JUNE 2012

INTERIOR, CRPETERIA KITCHEN, 1ST FLOOR, LOOKING NORTHWEST

30/30